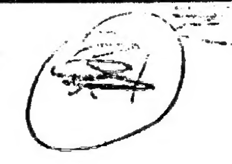
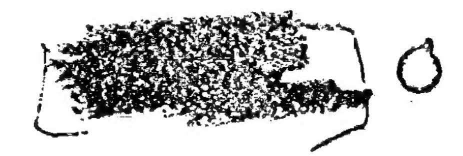






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OCT 2 1952

MEMORANDUM TO: Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

FROM: Assistant Director, Office of Scientific Intelligence

SUBJECT: Flying Saucers

1. PROBLEM—To determine: (a) Whether or not there are national security implications in the problem of "unidentified flying objects"; (b) whether or not adequate study and research is currently being directed to this problem in its relation to such national security implications; and (c) what further investigation and research should be instituted, by whom, and under what aegis.

2. FACTS AND DISCUSSION—OSI has investigated the work currently being performed on "flying saucers" and found that the Air Technical Intelligence Center, DI, USAF, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, is the only group devoting appreciable effort and study to this subject, that ATIC is concentrating on a case-by-case explanation of each report, and that this effort is not adequate to correlate, evaluate, and resolve the situation on an over-all basis. The current problem is discussed in detail in TAB A.

3. CONCLUSIONS—"Flying saucers" pose two elements of danger which have national security implications. The first involves mass psychological considerations and the second concerns the vulnerability of the United States to air attack. Both factors are amplified in TAB A.

4. ACTION RECOMMENDED—(a) That the Director of Central Intelligence advise the National Security Council of the implications of the "flying saucer" problem and request that research be initiated. TAB B is a draft memorandum to the NSC, for the DCI's signature. (b) That the DCI discuss this subject with the Psychological Strategy Board. A memorandum to the Director, Psychological Strategy Board, is attached for signature as TAB C. (c) That CIA, with the cooperation of PSB and other interested departments and agencies, develop and recommend for adoption by the NSC a

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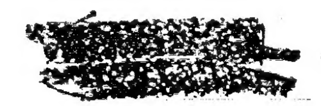
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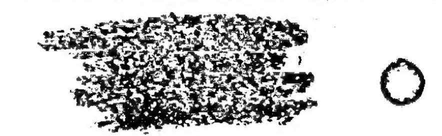
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policy of public information which will minimize concern and possible panic resulting from the numerous sightings of unidentified objects.

H. Marshall Chadwell
H. MARSHALL CHADWELL
Assistant Director
Scientific Intelligence

ANNEXES:
TAB A--Memorandum to DCI, through DDI, Subject: Flying Saucers.
TAB B--Letter to National Security Council with enclosure.
TAB C--Memo to Director, Psychological Strategy Board with enclosure.

CONCURRENCES:

Date: ____________________

LOFTUS E. BECKER
Deputy Director/Intelligence

ACTION BY APPROVING AUTHORITY:

Date: ____________________

Approved (disapproved): ____________________

WALTER B. SMITH
Director

[redacted]



Executive Registry
[illegible]

SEP 24 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT : Flying Saucers

1. Recently an inquiry was conducted by the Office of Scientific Intelligence to determine whether there are national security implications in the problem of "unidentified flying objects," i.e., flying saucers; whether adequate study and research is currently being directed to this problem in its relation to such national security implications; and what further investigation and research should be instituted, by whom, and under what aegis.

2. It was found that the only unit of Government currently studying the problem is the Directorate of Intelligence, USAF, which has charged the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) with responsibility for investigating the reports of sightings. At ATIC there is a group of three officers and two secretaries to which come, through official channels, all reports of sightings. This group conducts investigation of the reports, consulting as required with other Air Force and civilian technical personnel. A world-wide reporting system has been instituted and major Air Force Bases have been ordered to make interceptions of unidentified flying objects. The research is being conducted on a case basis and is designed to provide a satisfactory explanation of each individual sighting. ATIC has concluded an arrangement with Battelle Memorial Institute for the latter to establish a machine indexing system for official reports of sightings.

3. Since 1947, ATIC has received approximately 1500 official reports of sightings plus an enormous volume of letters, phone calls, and press reports. During July 1952 alone, official reports totaled 250. Of the 1500 reports, Air Force carries 20 percent as unexplained and of those received from January through July 1952 it carries 28 percent unexplained.

4. In its inquiry into this problem, a team from CIA's Office of Scientific Intelligence consulted with a representative of Air Force Special Studies Group; discussed the problem with those in charge of the Air Force Project at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base; reviewed a considerable volume of intelligence reports; checked the Soviet press and broadcast indices; and conferred with three CIA consultants, who have broad knowledge of the technical areas concerned.





5. It was found that the ATIC study is probably valid if the purpose is limited to a case-by-case explanation. However, that study does not solve the more fundamental aspects of the problem. These aspects are to determine definitely the nature of the various phenomena which are causing these sightings, and to discover means by which these causes, and their visual or electronic effects, may be identified immediately. The CIA consultants stated that these solutions would probably be found on the margins or just beyond the frontiers of our present knowledge in the fields of atmospheric, ionospheric, and extraterrestrial phenomena, with the added possibility that the present dispersal of nuclear waste products might also be a factor. They recommended that a study group be formed to perform three functions:

a. analyze and systematize the factors which constitute the fundamental problem;

b. determine the fields of fundamental science which must be investigated in order to reach an understanding of the phenomena involved; and

c. make recommendations for the initiation of appropriate research.

Dr. Julius A. Stratton, Vice President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has indicated to CIA that such a group could be constituted at that Institute. Similarly, Project Lincoln, the Air Force's air defense project at MIT, could be charged with some of these responsibilities.

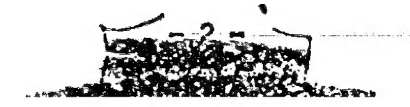
6. The flying saucer situation contains two elements of danger which, in a situation of international tension, have national security implications. These are:

a. <u>Psychological</u> - With world-wide sightings reported, it was found that, up to the time of the investigation, there had been in the Soviet press no report or comment, even satirical, on flying saucers, though Gromyko had made one humorous mention of the subject. With a State-controlled press, this could result only from an official policy decision. The question, therefore, arises as to whether or not these sightings:

(1) could be controlled,

(2) could be predicted, and

(3) could be used from a psychological warfare point of view, either offensively or defensively.





The public concern with the phenomena, which is reflected both in the United States press and in the pressure of inquiry upon the Air Force, indicates that a fair proportion of our population is mentally conditioned to the acceptance of the incredible. In this fact lies the potential for the touching-off of mass hysteria and panic.

b. Air Vulnerability - The United States Air Warning System will undoubtedly always depend upon a combination of radar screening and visual observation. The U.S.S.R. is credited with the present capability of delivering an air attack against the United States, yet at any given moment now, there may be current a dozen official unidentified sightings plus many unofficial ones. At any moment of attack, we are now in a position where we cannot, on an instant basis, distinguish hardware from phantom, and as tension mounts we will run the increasing risk of false alerts and the even greater danger of falsely identifying the real as phantom.

7. Both of these problems are primarily operational in nature but each contains readily apparent intelligence factors.

8. From an operational point of view, three actions are required:

a. Immediate steps should be taken to improve identification of both visual and electronic phantom so that, in the event of an attack, instant and positive identification of enemy planes or missiles can be made.

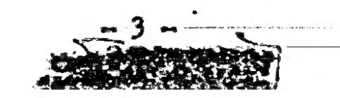
b. A study should be instituted to determine what, if any, utilization could be made of these phenomena by United States psychological warfare planners and what, if any, defenses should be planned in anticipation of Soviet attempts to utilize them.

c. In order to minimize risk of panic, a national policy should be established as to what should be told the public regarding the phenomena.

9. Other intelligence problems which require determination are:

a. The present level of Soviet knowledge regarding these phenomena.

b. Possible Soviet intentions and capabilities to utilize these phenomena to the detriment of United States security interests.





c. The reasons for silence in the Soviet press regarding flying saucers.

10. Additional research, differing in character and emphasis from that presently being performed by Air Force, will be required to meet the specific needs of both operations and intelligence. Intelligence responsibilities in this field as regards both collection and analysis can be discharged with maximum effectiveness only after much more is known regarding the exact nature of these phenomena.

11. I consider this problem to be of such importance that it should be brought to the attention of the National Security Council, in order that a community-wide coordinated effort towards its solution may be initiated.

H. MARSHALL CHADWELL
Assistant Director
Scientific Intelligence

